

BOXES

I completely lost it when I packed my first box to move from Guatemala to Colorado. We were standing in the living room and Kyle mentioned packing up our music and movies and I started weeping. He hugged me and I just stood there crying. "I'm not ready," I told him. "I love it here; I'm not ready to leave." The emotional floodgate had been opened.

As we faced an international move, Kyle and I decided to put off packing as long as possible so that we could fully live and be present our last few months in Guatemala. Up to that point, I had successfully lived in the present, lived fully, with my emotions about moving on hold. Sure, we had empty boxes around the house waiting to be filled, but not wanting to extend our time in transition, we left them empty for as long as possible.

Moving is an interesting thing. Lugging all of your earthly possessions from one place to another, filling boxes with the things that you think you need in the next place, leaving behind the stuff you assume you won't need. What is it all about, anyway?

In our organization, we are trained about transition. Transition can be similar to losing someone close to you. You tend to feel the same kind of loss. You leave behind not only people, places, experiences, and things, but you often feel like you are losing part of who you are. In some ways, who you are, what you do, who people know you to be also gets "put in a box." In the new place, people don't know you for what you have done in the past.



Thanks to our good friends the Ellers, we finished packing our house on time!

In the last seven years, some of "me" never came out of that box. Even with good Spanish language abilities and good Guatemalan friends, part of "me" was rarely seen by people here. Will it come out of the box in Colorado? And on the other hand, I've grown. New parts of "me" developed during life in Guatemala. Will those things come out of the box in this next phase of ministry?

Whenever we travel, I unpack my bag into the dresser, closet, and shelf, whatever is available. Even if we are only staying one night, I like to unpack. That way I feel fully present. In times of transition, I think it is important to unpack completely as soon as possible. Not just our possessions, but who we are. We need to do the best we can to empty the contents of each box and fully live.

As you read this, all of our earthly possessions are in boxes being sent on an ocean container from Guatemala to Colorado Springs. While we were packing the container, we looked at all the stuff we have and realized how unimportant it really is. Sure, we appreciate all that God has given to us, but when it comes down to it, the things that are on that ship, we can live without. They are not what make up our true identity. May God help us not to be afraid and unpack the things that truly matter, and may we fully live out Christ Jesus who is formed in us.

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